



Office of the
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
272 Main Street
Townsend, Massachusetts 01469

Sue Lisio, *Chairman*

Colin McNabb, *Vice-Chairman*

Carolyn Smart, *Clerk*

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MINUTES
MARCH 10, 2015, 6:00 P.M.
SELECTMEN'S CHAMBERS, TOWN HALL
272 MAIN STREET, TOWNSEND, MA

I PRELIMINARIES

- 1.1 At 6:00PM the Chairman called the meeting to order. Roll call showed Sue Lisio, Chairman (SL), Colin McNabb, Vice Chairman (CM), and Carolyn Smart, Clerk (CS) present.
- 1.2 Pledge of Allegiance observed.
- 1.3 SL announced that the meeting is being tape recorded.
- 1.4 Chairman's Additions or Deletions: Delete 4.3
- 1.5 Town Administrator updates and reports:
 - Town Administrator, Andrew Sheehan (AS) reminded the Board and the Finance Committee that Nashoba Tech breakfast presenting their budget will be Friday morning.
 - Last week was the deadline for warrants articles and petitions. Received no petitions and standard amount of warrant articles.
 - Treasurer/Collector Kate Stacy verbally tendered her resignation citing another employment opportunity and lack of support from the organization.
- 1.6 Board of Selectmen announcements, updates, and reports:
 - CS attended Board of Health meeting on the emergency dispensing plan. Town has the ability to set up emergency vaccinations if needed.
 - CS discussed the capital plan for the street lights, adding that Groton has a bucket truck and staff, perhaps forming an agreement with Groton to maintain Townsend lights as well. CM talked about the maintenance possibly being subbed to a vendor under the Green Communities Act. AS will look in to options.
 - CS requested that Recreation Commission be invited to an upcoming meeting to discuss annex building. AS will schedule.
- 1.7 Approval of meeting minutes: February 11 and 24, 2015. CS moved to approve the meeting minutes for February 11 and 24, 2015. CM seconded. Unanimous.

II APPOINTMENTS AND HEARINGS

- 3.11 Review and approve one day liquor license for Terri Roy, VFW Post 6538, for a Jack & Jill Party on March 28, 2015 from 7:00PM to 11:00PM. CS moved to approve the one day liquor license for Terri Roy, VFW Post 6538, for a Jack & Jill Party on March 28, 2015 with sale hours from 7:00PM to 11:00PM. CM seconded. Unanimous.
- 4.1 Review and approve recommendation of the Conservation Commission to appoint Leslie Gabrilkska to serve as one of the Town's representatives on the Northeast Municipal Gas Pipeline Coalition. CS moved to approve the recommendation of the Conservation Commission to appoint Leslie Gabrilkska to serve as one of the Town's representatives on the Northeast Municipal Gas Pipeline Coalition. CM seconded. Unanimous.

- 4.2 Review and approve recommendation of Fire-EMS Chief Mark Boynton to appoint Cory Lopez and Danielle Priest as On-Call Firefighters with terms from March 10, 2015 to June 30, 2015. CS moved to approve the recommendation of Fire-EMS Chief Mark Boynton to appoint Cory Lopez and Danielle Priest as On-Call Firefighters with terms from March 10, 2015 to June 30, 2015. CM seconded. Unanimous.
- 2.1 6:15 Squannacook Greenways: Steve Meehan and Bill Rideout will be present to provide an update on the rail trail project. Steve Meehan (SM), said on January 26, 2015, the MBTA signed lease giving Squannacook Greenways permission to build rail trail from Groton in to Townsend. On the Townsend end, rail trail will be going to Depot Street. Plans for next year will include abutter outreach, sending out letters and offering to meet one on one, then fundraising, followed by permit process and hopefully construction in 2016. SM asked what the town's intention for the sidewalk in the harbor area is, AS responded that will be moving forward with procuring a designer, the appropriation from 2006 is about \$100,000 to cover South Street to the Harbor Church, about 800 feet. CS discussed the Chapter 90 money being put towards that as well as being put back on the TIP list, and SM clarified that the town funds would be for the design and the TIP money would be for the construction. CM added that he thinks that any remaining Chapter 90 money should be put towards the roads due to the difficult winter. Chapter 90 money will be discussed with Ed Kukkla, Highway Superintendent at a future meeting. Bill Rideout (BR) added that the sidewalk would not be needed to open up the rail trail as there is a possibility that it may start out with stone dust as a temporary measure. BR also brought up the width, which is approximately four (4) feet. SL asked how much money was needed to construct the rail trail, SM answered \$150,000, which included \$25,000 already in place. The donation aspect will be forthcoming and the Board will be made aware once donation plans are in place.
- 2.2 6:30 North Middlesex Regional High School inspections: discussion of inspection fees for the High School building project. Richard Hanks, Building Commissioner (RH) was in attendance for discussion. AS reviewed discussion from last meeting; most of outstanding issues resolved including departmental funds being available in a revolving fund. Terry Walsh, Town Accountant, spoke to the Department of Revenue, which recommended revolving fund as well as clarifying that the fund can go in to effect in the current year, which will lead to it being on the Town Meeting warrant twice, once to authorize for the current Fiscal Year (FY15), and as a reauthorization article for Fiscal Year 16. AS also reviewed the compensation for the stipend inspectors will be \$60 per hour for gas, plumbing, and wiring inspectors as well as their alternates. RH and AS discussed some incidental costs such as mileage reimbursement, miscellaneous expenses, and additional hours for administrative assistant and additional hours for the alternate inspectors. The costs associated would be \$10,000 for alternate inspectors, \$1000 for miscellaneous, \$1500 for mileage, and \$4300 for administrative assistant. The remaining discussion is what RH will be paid. SL asked what the estimate was for the inspectors, AS answered that RH advised the cost should not go above \$100,000 for the three (3) years. CS discussed the administrative assistant estimate. RH would like to bring the administrative assistant role up to 30 hours a week from 26 even after the project was complete, which was decided would be a budget issue. Discussion of how many hours were needed by RH to complete this project, RH said he averages about 10 hours a week. CM asked RH if he would be coming in during off hours, RH said yes, as well as working from home if need be. SL philosophically disagrees with giving a salaried employee extra money for a project that is part of their job, however willing to go to \$8300 a year for a stipend for RH, and requested a motion. CM asked CS if she would agree to a \$13,500 stipend, which she did agree to. CM made a motion that the stipend amount per year be \$13,500. CS seconded. CM added this would not be reviewed. Motion passed 2-1 (SL opposed). AS asked for clarification as to when the stipend would start, asking for a vote for the effective date. CM amended the motion to reflect a start date of January 1, 2015. CS seconded. Passed 2-1 (SL opposed). SL asked that AS work with the Town Accountant to assess the Building Committee, AS explained that there would be a permit fee, SL requested AS for clarification on the permit fee schedule.

III MEETING BUSINESS

- 3.1 Executive Session: pursuant to GL c. 30A, s. 21(a) (6) to consider the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real property. AS asked to postpone this item to March 24, 2015 agenda.
- 3.2 Discuss and review Winter Snow Removal Operations and Procedures. Ed Kukkula, Highway Superintendent (EK), discussed the pamphlet that is on the website to make residents aware of what the Highway Department does during snow storms, as well as the continuing policy of not replacing/reimbursing mailboxes. The drivers do not intentionally cause damage, however visibility can be poor during the storms as well as the high snow banks. Discussion about replacing mailboxes as well as how to determine damage from plow versus snow/ice, at no fault. CS discussed property damage going through insurance, SL disagreed with encouraging residents to filing claims. CM requested 5 minute break at 6:50PM. CM continued discussion on replacing/reimbursing for mailbox replacement. AS said that due to the difficulties of proving that it was a plow that caused the damage, it is difficult to manage these claims, SL agreed and does not want to spend taxpayer's money. CS discussed Groton's policy on reimbursement on mailboxes and suggested researching that policy. CM moved that the Board ask the Highway Superintendent to look in to the possibility of reimbursement for mailboxes. Passed 2-1 (SL opposed). EK asked to clarify what the Board is looking for in a policy. CS responded that EK should look at mailboxes only.
- 3.3 Discuss Tax Collector audit pursuant to GL c. 60, s. 97. AS reviewed the email from Town Counsel determining that the Town complied with the intent of the law to do the Tax Collector audit when finishing the FY14 audit. The Board voted on February 10, 2015 to have Melanson and Heath do the audit. CS discussed not being in compliance with the law. SL read email from Town Counsel. CS disagreed with Counsel's opinion. AS and CM agree that Town Counsel does not indicate that the town is in violation of the law. SL requested that AS invite Town Counsel to the next meeting.
- 3.4 Discuss posting requirements for vacancies. AS reviewed discussion from last meeting on the adequacies of the vacancies posted in the Treasurer/Collectors office and the Accountants office and the interpretation of the language in the Charter. Town Counsel said that there is nothing wrong in the process that was followed. CS disagreed with Town Counsel's opinion.
- 3.5 Review discuss email and internet policy. SL revisited the policy and suggested making changes to update, with attention to sharing passwords and usernames. SL requested that the board go through the policy and requested that AS get a current template from Counsel to adequately update and protect the town from liability. CS asked AS where the computer plan update is, AS responded that Melissa Hermann is about half way through updating computers.
- 3.6 Review request of Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company, LLC for permission to survey on Town-owned land on Greenville Road. AS reported that Kinder Morgan changed plans; requester permission last year, but not to survey Greenville Road. CS moved to deny permission to Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company, LLC for permission to survey on Town-owned land on Greenville Road. CM seconded. Unanimous.
- 3.7 Review request from Council on Aging Director Karin Canfield Moore to accept a grant in the amount of \$10,000 from the Nashoba Valley Community Healthcare Fund Advisory Committee, Community Foundation of North Central Massachusetts, and Greater Lowell Community Foundation with funds being used to implement the Body in Motion Fund. CS moved to accept the grant in the amount of \$10,000 from the Nashoba Valley Community Healthcare Fund Advisory Committee, Community Foundation of North Central Massachusetts, and Greater Lowell Community Foundation with funds to be implemented by the Body in Motion Fund. CM seconded. Unanimous.
- 3.8 Discuss Department of Revenue analytics comparing statistics for Townsend and comparable communities. SL presented information on population and average tax bills and said she wanted to correct some information that had been presented recently. CS responded that there is a downward trend in population SL said average single family taxes are not higher than surrounding areas. SL shared information that was taken from the DOR. CS suggested comparing like size communities. AS clarified

that it matters how towns are selected and that one criterion does not tell the whole picture.

Comparatively, based on the communities that Townsend is measured against, Townsend is either in the middle or at the bottom. The tax rate is a little higher but that is because Townsend has less commercial and industrial property. Townsend is also in the middle for per capita income.

- 3.9 FY16 operating budget: continue discussion of the FY16 operating budget. SL asked AS if the inspectors (plumbing, gas, and wiring) stipends had been increased in the budget as previously discussed. AS said that the increase was the customary 2 ½ % to the stipend. SL said that the board should look at what the stipend employees are currently earning, and discuss further. AS reported updates to the budget: preliminary numbers from the superintendent's office that showed a modest decline in Townsend's assessment, due to lower enrollment. Nashoba Tech's budget will be available tomorrow. NMRHS voted to certify a budget last night, the superintendent presented the original budget at 5.1% increase and a revised budget that at a 2.89% increase. Committee accepted the 2.89%, but added in \$300,000 worth of expenditures. Total assessment was originally \$9.55 million, but with the budget is now \$9.80 million. Health insurance is also a factor with a 10% increase. CM asked what the justification was for the increase for the school budget, AS was not at the meeting and did not know the reason. SL said that typically the school committee certifies high, but ends up cutting. Discussed what priorities are for the Town. CS asked about health insurance bids, and AS answered that the health insurance was put out to bid last year. The market is going up substantially, at an average of 9-15%. SL asked what the Town contributes to employee healthcare, AS responded that the town pays 85%, which SL believes is high. AS said that insurances are 11% of the entire budget. Curbside contract is out for bid and is due back the end of the month (March). Depending on what happens with the curbside proposals, it may be a separate article from the budget, to give the public the opportunity to weigh in. SL asked AS to email updates as they came in to the board. AS reported that not much has changed with revenues. Currently, total projection for fiscal 2016 is \$20,078,000 for revenues. Revenue working group consists of finance committee, Town Treasurer, Town Accountant and Town Administrator. CS disagreed with the excise tax estimate and AS presented his justification AS reiterated that projections are not based on 95% of the FY14 actual amounts collected and objected that we are maxing out our estimates. AS said it is important to remember that the purpose of the budget is to fund ongoing operations, not for reserves. AS added that over the last 10 years, local aid has been reduced by about \$500,000, and Townsend could do more with that amount provided by local aid. Townsend has a revenue problem and not a spending problem.
- 3.10 Retiree health insurance: Discussion of employee survey responses. SL asked how many people received survey, AS responded that all employees working 20 hours plus a week, union and non-union employees received the survey, about 60 total, and about 30 responses have come back. CM requested item tabled until next meeting to allow time to review. No vote was taken.

IV APPOINTMENTS OF PERSONNEL/OFFICIALS

- 4.3 ~~Review and approve the recommendation of Treasurer Collector Kate Stacy to hire a Collections Clerk in the Treasury Collections Office. Votes may be taken.~~

V WORK SESSION

- 5.1 Review and sign payroll and bills payable warrants. Votes may be taken. CS moved to review and sign payroll and bills payable warrants outside of session. CM seconded. Unanimous. CM moved to adjourn at 8:44PM. CS seconded. CM aye; CS aye; SL aye.

Note: documents used or referenced during the meeting are available at http://www.townsend.ma.us/Pages/TownsendMA_BOSAgenda/ or in the Selectmen's Office.